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## TYPE OF DOCUMENT:

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-15  
A Resolution of the Yuma County Board of Supervisors Adopting the Revised  
YUMA COUNTY TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION  
& EXPENSE ALLOWANCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

## DOCUMENT APPROVAL:

*(Check appropriate box, fill in blanks.)*

Approved by Yuma County Board of Supervisors:  
May 18, 2015, Consent Item No. 3.



**YUMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
RESOLUTION NO. 2015-15**

**A Resolution of the Yuma County Board of Supervisors  
Adopting the revised Yuma County Travel Authorization  
& Expense Allowance Policies and Procedures**

History: Adopted 12-07-98, #17 (superseded by Resolution No. 08-25).

Revised 05-19-08, #D2, Resolution No. 08-25

Revised 05-18-2015, #C3, Resolution No. 2015-15.

- WHEREAS:** The current Travel Authorization & Expense Allowance Policies and Procedures need to be revised to reference the proper source for the per diem and lodging rates, and;
- WHEREAS:** There are new policies and procedures in completing travel requests needed;
- WHEREAS:** This policy supersedes any and all other travel policies previously adopted.

The Yuma County Travel Authorization & Expense Allowance Policies & Procedures are adopted to read as follows:

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The following travel policies and procedures establish a uniform method for authorization, advancement of travel funds, and expense reimbursement for travel - related expenses incurred by Yuma County officers, deputies, agency heads, and employees, members of any board, commission, or agency who travel on official business outside of their designated post of duty. As custodians of public funds, all travel expenditures should be carefully reviewed for necessity and cost effectiveness.

The only exceptions to compliance with these policies and procedures are those travel expenses incurred under the authority of A. R. S. 11-444, Expenses of Sheriff as County Charge, expense fund.

## **II. TRAVEL POLICIES**

### **A. Travel Authorization**

All travel on official County business must be approved in advance or after the event by the approving authority (Agency Head or designee). Travel by County agency heads must be approved by the County Administrator. All travel expenses by elected officials must be approved as to the availability of funds by the Finance Director or designee.

All travel fund advance payments for lodging and meal per diem expenses in excess of the daily maximums must be approved by the Agency Head or County Administrator. The County Administrator must approve all travel fund advance payments for lodging and meal per diem in excess of the daily maximums for all agency heads.

The approving authority will exercise budgetary control over all travel expenditures. No advances or reimbursements will be made by the Finance Department if sufficient funds are not available. Also, no personal credit card expenses will be reimbursed, without proper written justification for its use, signed by the approving authority.

### **B. Travel Reimbursement Standards**

Any official or employee who is required to travel on official County business is eligible for reimbursement for all travel-related expenses incurred. All travel advances and reimbursements must be reported on the County's Travel Authorization and Claim Form.

When traveling on official County business, officials and employees should exercise the same degree of care when expending County funds as a prudent person would exercise if expending personal funds. Excess costs incurred due to circuitous routes, nonstandard accommodations, or unnecessary costs are unacceptable. An employee or official traveling by an indirect route for his or her own pleasure and convenience will not be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses in excess of those which would have been required for travel by the most direct route. In addition, the employee will be required to charge such excess travel time to vacation leave or accrued compensatory time.

Post of duty is defined as the place where the official or employee spends the majority of his or her regular work day or work time, or the duty/work place to which he or she returns on completion of special assignments. The designated post of duty of members of boards, commissions, authorities, councils, and committees who are not full-time employees of the agency served by the board, commission, authority, council, or committee is deemed to be their place of residence, unless a duty station is specified by proper authority.

For computing per diem allowances, official travel begins at the time an official or employee leaves his/her home, designated post of duty or office, or other authorized point of departure and ends when the traveler returns to his/her home, designated post of duty or office, or other authorized point of departure at the conclusion of the trip.

Per Diem expenses include both lodging and meals. Entitlement to per diem expense reimbursement is based on the following criteria:

**1. Travel within the County**

No per diem meal allowance will be allowed within the boundaries of the County of Yuma.

**2. Travel Outside Yuma County**

If travel is required outside Yuma County which requires an overnight stay, the maximum prescribed lodging per diem rate for the destination location is as stated in the U.S. General Service Administration (GSA) as approved by the United States Internal Revenue Code. If the travel period encompasses a full 24 hour period, the maximum prescribed meal per diem will apply.

If lodging is not required, the official or employee may request reimbursement for per diem meal allowance if on travel status during the following hours:

Breakfast	Prior to 6:00 a.m.
Lunch	Between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
Dinner	Between 6:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m.

**C. Transportation**

Transportation expenses are for usual and customary air and ground transportation fares for common carriers; private automobile or aircraft mileage allowances; taxi, bus, and streetcar fares; motor vehicle and aircraft rental and any other necessary means of conveyance. Other allowable reimbursable expenditures include emergency repairs to County-owned vehicles, bridge and road tolls, parking fees, and all other charges essential to travel.

**1. Limitations**

The mode of transportation selected must be in the best interest of the County and will take into consideration the direct expense cost as well as the traveler's time. The approving authority will determine the mode of transportation based on budget limitations.

Expenses arising from travel between home or garage and the designated post of duty are not reimbursable. When a trip is commenced or terminated at the claimant's home, the distance traveled will be computed from either his/her designated post of duty or home, whichever results in the lesser distance.

## 2. Common Carriers

**a. Airlines** - An elected official or employee's time and the travel distance are primary factors when selecting air travel as the preferred mode of transportation. In the determination of fares paid for air travel, the place of origin or return will be the official's or employee's designated post of duty or residence, whichever results in the lesser distance.

Claims for scheduled air travel reimbursement will be allowed at the lowest fare available. All elected officials, agency heads and employees will make every effort to plan their trips far enough in advance to take advantage of the current reduced fares. **Flight coupons must be furnished with the travel claim for reimbursement.**

**b. Railroads** - Rail travel is permitted when other modes of transportation are unavailable. Rail travel may be the best mode of local transportation in large metropolitan areas. Additional costs for sleeping accommodations are a reimbursable expense when necessity dictates their use. **Receipts must be furnished with the travel claim for reimbursement.**

**c. Bus Lines** - Bus travel is permitted when other modes of transportation are unavailable. Bus travel may be the best mode of local transportation in large metropolitan areas. **Receipts must be furnished with the travel claim for reimbursement.**

## 3. Rented Automobiles

Automobile rental is permissible when other means of transportation are unavailable or cannot be used economically or conveniently. It is the approving authority's responsibility to determine if the additional expense involved in automobile rental is justifiable. Public transportation alternatives (taxicabs, buses, and trains) availability and costs should be reviewed prior to authorization of rented automobiles. **Receipts must be furnished with the travel claim for reimbursement.**

**a. Damage Waiver or Insurance Costs** - Additional rental insurance offered by the rental car company will be declined. The County's Casualty Insurance Plan covers the use of rental cars operated by officials or employees of the County. Further information can be found on this subject in the Yuma County Risk Management and Safety Policy. If an official or employee accepts the additional insurance, it will not be considered a reimbursable expense.

#### **4. Privately-Owned or Chartered Aircraft**

It is the responsibility of the County Administrator, not the approving authority, to authorize the use of this means of transportation. While the use of privately-owned or chartered aircraft is allowed, the County Administrator will consider the following criteria when determining its use:

- The trip must have a valid public purpose which is best served by use of private or chartered aircraft and is not simply for the convenience of the official(s) or employee(s) involved.
- Alternate means of travel (commercial airlines or ground transportation) are not available or practical.

A complete written justification detailing the purpose and necessity of using this mode of transportation must be submitted with the Travel Authorization and Claim Form to the County Administrator in advance of the travel date.

Officials or employees who are licensed aircraft pilots may request approval from the County Administrator to be authorized to operate an aircraft on official County business. Only those licensed pilots who have approved authorizations from the County Administrator on file with the Finance department will be allowed reimbursement for use of privately-owned aircraft. Aircraft pilot authorizations from the County Administrator must be filed and updated for approval annually.

Reimbursement for use of privately-owned aircraft will be at the rate prescribed by the Arizona Department of Administration General Accounting Office. In determining the reimbursable cost, mileage will be based on the most direct air route listed by the Civil Aeronautics Board or the shortest air route from origin to destination. Mileage shown on the claim should be clearly marked "Air Miles." If "Air Miles" cannot be accurately computed from origin to destination, the County Administrator may authorize reimbursement for the actual cost of renting a plane. Actual and necessary landing and parking fees will be reimbursed; however, no reimbursement will be made for storage or parking fees at the location where the privately-owned aircraft is normally based.

#### **5. Privately-Owned Vehicles**

County-owned vehicles must be used whenever possible. It is the responsibility of the approving authority to determine whether a County or privately-owned vehicle is to be used.

- a. Insurance and Licensing Requirements** - An elected official or employee driving a privately-owned vehicle on County business must have a valid Arizona driver's license.

The elected official or employee must complete the insurance and license statement on the Travel Authorization and Claim Form which certifies that he/she has a current valid Arizona driver's license and is covered by at least the minimum liability insurance prior to requesting reimbursement for mileage.

**b. Reimbursement Procedures** - When more than one official or employee travels in the same privately-owned vehicle only the vehicle owner may submit a claim for mileage reimbursement. The mileage reimbursement rate for privately-owned vehicles will be at the rate prescribed by the GSA's "Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV) mileage reimbursement rates"

Mileage reimbursement will be based on the most direct route. Mileage reimbursement claims will be made by means of the Travel Authorization and Claim Form. **Proof of NO County-Owned vehicle available must be provided when claiming the full "POV mileage reimbursement rate".**

**County credit cards/procurement cards will not be used to fuel privately-owned vehicles.**

When a trip commences or terminates at the claimant's home, mileage will be allowed from either the designated post of duty or home, whichever results in the lesser distance.

If the trip involves multiple stops, the travel itinerary locations must reflect each segment of the trip in the "Remarks" column of the Travel Authorization Claim Form. However, mileage and odometer readings should only be reported for the first and last segment of the trip. If the travel is between two or more cities or towns, mileage will be reimbursed on either the odometer readings or map mileage, whichever is less. If using an online map website, a printout of this must be included.

#### **6. Other Allowable Transportation Expenses**

**a. Local Transportation** - Taxicabs, airport limousines, local buses, and streetcars are classified as local transportation and are not considered common carrier transportation. Officials and employees will use the local transportation that is most advantageous to the County.

**b. Parking Fees** - When traveling on official County business, parking fees are reimbursable. Airport parking or storage fees are allowed if the total parking cost is less than the cost of a taxi to and from the airport.

**c. Miscellaneous Travel Expenses** - Miscellaneous travel expenses such as baggage handling, bridge/road tolls, fuel purchases for County vehicles or rental cars or any other transportation expense deemed necessary to conduct County business are reimbursable.

When requesting reimbursement for any of the above transportation expenses, the official or employee must submit a receipt. If the official or employee is unable to obtain a receipt, reimbursement will be granted only after the approving authority checks the amount for reasonableness, and a signed memo is attached to the Travel Authorization and Claim Form explaining the reason the receipt is unavailable.

**D. Telephone, Fax, Cellular Phone, and Web Access Expenses**

Telephone, fax, cellular phone, and web access charges incurred by officials on County business are considered a reimbursable expense. Personal telephone calls, faxes, and web access charges are not eligible for reimbursement.

**E. Lodging Expenses**

**1. Accommodation Criteria**

Lodging is defined as overnight sleeping accommodations at a commercial establishment (hotel or motel). The approving authority may authorize lodging expenses incurred at an establishment other than a commercial hotel or motel.

- All accommodations will be paid for in advance or during travel via a County issued warrant directly to the hotel/motel, or through County issued procurement card.
- Personal rewards programs that benefit the traveler, not the County, will not be used by any official or employee. This practice may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from County employment.

**2. Reimbursement Criteria**

Accommodations are not a reimbursable expense, as they are required to be paid for in advance, or during travel.

- **Exception:** If the travel is last minute, and a County warrant can not be issued in time, and the hotel does not accept the County issued procurement card, accommodations may be reimbursed with a memo signed by the approving authority explaining the need for reimbursement.

Reimbursement will be made according to rates established by the GSA Per Diem rates; unless higher limits are authorized by the Agency Head or County Administrator. Lodging rates are not to exceed 300% (Three hundred percent) of the established GSA Per Diem rates.



**F. Meal Expenses**

Meals are defined as any food expenses, including applicable taxes and tips, incurred at a restaurant or other public eating facility. Meal reimbursement is allowed only if the official or employee is on official County business. If meals are provided or included in other travel or registration fees, the County will not reimburse any additional meal claims. **Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages is not authorized.**

**1. Meal Time Frame Criteria**

County officials or employees may request meal expenditure reimbursement if they are on official County business during the following hours:

Breakfast	Prior to 6:00 a.m.
Lunch	Between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
Dinner	Between 6:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m.

An official or employee on County business may claim only a maximum of one breakfast, one lunch, and one dinner for every continuous twenty-four (24) hour period.

If the official or employee is required to travel at night (between 12:00 am, and 6:00 am), he/she may be reimbursed for meals outside the above schedule with authorization from the approving authority or County Administrator.

**2. Meal Reimbursement Criteria**

The maximum allowable reimbursement for meal expenses will be at the rate prescribed by the GSA Per Diem rates.

Meal expenses in excess of the maximum amounts must be authorized by the approving authority. Whenever an official or employee is entitled to two or more meal allowances, the amount expended for any particular meal is left to his/her discretion.

If the travel status period is less than a full twenty-four (24) hours, the per diem meal reimbursement will be allocated as follows:

Breakfast	18.75 % X the allowable per diem
Lunch	23.50 % X the allowable per diem
Dinner	57.75 % X the allowable per diem

**G. Educational and Professional Meetings, Conferences, and Conventions**

**1. Qualifying Criteria**

Officials and employees may attend educational and professional meetings, conferences, and conventions if funds have been appropriated for such purposes and if such education, training, conference or convention is directly job-related.

**2. Registration Fees, Lodging, Meal, and Transportation Expenses**

Registration fees and other expenses incurred as a part of an education or training seminar, conference or convention will be paid for in advance of the travel, or during travel either by County issued warrant or procurement card. Lodging, meal, and transportation expenses will conform to the previously outlined allowable expenditure limits, unless higher limits are authorized by the Agency Head or County Administrator. A copy of the conference convention, seminar agenda, or other literature showing the dates of the meeting and fee schedules must accompany the Travel Authorization and Claim Form.

Expenses for leisure (tour) packages offered in conjunction with the conference, convention, or seminar are not reimbursable. The County will reimburse for meal and lodging expenses not more than one day prior or one day following the event to allow for reasonable travel time. If the official or employee chooses to arrive early or stay after the meeting for non-business reasons, they will be required to use vacation or compensatory time to cover this period and will be responsible for all other expenses.

**III. TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION AND CLAIM FORM PROCEDURES**

**A. Employee Responsibilities**

It is the elected official, agency head, or employee's responsibility to prepare an itemized Travel Authorization Claim Form in accordance with all procedures and limits established in the County's Travel Authorization and Expense Allowance Policies and Procedures. The Finance department will return any claim form that is incomplete or lacks the proper receipts or documentation. **Receipts are required for all expenditures, except per diem meal allotments and mileage reimbursement. Receipts must be originals, unless charged to the procurement card, in which case the original must be forwarded to the Procurement Card Administrator, and a copy is to be attached to the Travel Authorization and Claim Form.**

Claims for travel advances or final travel reimbursements must be filed with the Finance Department no later than Wednesday at noon. Claims filed by Wednesday noon, will be processed and paid by the following Friday. All claims filed after Wednesday noon will be processed on the second Friday after they are received.

**B. Travel Advances**

If the County official or employee requires advance payment of any or all anticipated travel expenditures, he/she must submit an authorized Travel Authorization and Claim Form to the Finance department at least two (2) weeks prior to the date the funds are needed. Advances will not be issued sooner than five (5) business days prior to departure. The following travel advance policies and procedures must be adhered to by all County officials and employees:

- No travel advance payments will be made if the anticipated expenses are less than \$55.00.
- When an official or employee receives a travel advance, the Finance department will reduce the final claim for reimbursement of travel expenses by the amount advanced.
- The final reconciliation of the Travel Authorization and Claim form must be submitted to Finance within five (5) working days after completion of travel or amounts advanced may be deducted from salary.

**1. Advance Payment Preparation Procedures**

In order to assure accurate and timely processing of an advance payment request, the following steps should be followed when completing the preliminary claim form:

- Supply all information requested in the top portion of the claim form, to include name, department, date, destination, purpose of travel, mode of travel, and dates of trip.
- If advance payments are required, complete the "Travel Advance Request" section. Please provide complete addresses and indicate to whom the warrant is to be sent and date needed.
- Obtain "preliminary" travel authorization signature from the approving authority or County Administrator.
- Sign the "Travel Advance Notice" statement.
- Send the claim form to the travel clerk in the Finance department to obtain a "Travel Order" number.

**C. Post Travel Claim Reconciliation and Reimbursement**

After the County official or employee has completed his/her travel, a Travel Authorization and Claim Form listing the exact amounts of all travel expenditures incurred must be completed. This completed claim form must be filed with the Finance Department within five (5) working days upon return from travel in order to receive reimbursement.

The following post travel claim reconciliation and reimbursement policies and procedures must be adhered to by all County officials and employees:

- **Receipts for all requested travel expenses (except daily per diem meal expenses and mileage claims) must accompany the final travel claim form for reimbursement. All claims for travel expense reimbursement without the appropriate receipts WILL NOT be reimbursed.**
- Meal and lodging reimbursements must comply with the previously stated time frames and amounts. The departure and arrival times for each leg of the trip must be completed in order to receive meal reimbursement.
- If actual allowable travel reimbursable expenses claimed equal the travel advance, the travel form will be filed with the Finance department without further processing.
- If actual travel expenses are less than the amount advanced the official or employee, the unexpended funds must be returned to the County within five (5) working days after completion of the travel, if the amount exceeds \$5.00. The agency will deposit these unused funds with the County Treasurer and record the Treasurer's Receipt Number on the travel claim form.
- If actual allowable travel reimbursable expenses exceed the amount advanced the official or employee by a minimum of \$5.00, a warrant will be issued to the official or employee by the Finance Department on the next scheduled demand run after the travel claim form is filed with the Finance Department.

- If the Finance Department determines that any of the travel expenses are ineligible for reimbursement, said expenses will be deducted from any reimbursement due the official or employee. The following are examples of non-reimbursable expenses:

- Dry Cleaning
- Laundry
- Room Service Charges
- Personal Sundry Items
- Green Fees
- Valet Parking
- Movie Rentals
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Personal Entertainment Expenses

**1. Final Reimbursement Procedures**

In order to assure accurate and timely processing of the final reimbursement request, the following steps should be followed when completing the Travel Authorization and Claim Form:

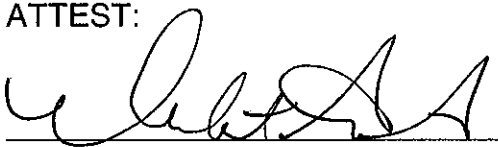
- List all travel expenditures by date and location in the “Detail of Travel Expenditures Upon Completion of Travel” section.
- Total each column.
- Subtract the Amounts Advanced and P-Card Charges from the column totals. If the results are positive, circle “EMPL” and a warrant will be issued to the traveler. If the result is negative, the traveler must write a check to the County to reimburse the unexpended funds within five (5) business days upon completion of the travel.
- Sign the “Final Travel Authorization – Travel Certification” statement.
- Obtain “Final” travel authorization signature from the approving authority or County Administrator.
- Send the completed form and all necessary receipts to the Finance Department.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Resolution No. 2015-15, adopting the revised Yuma County Travel Authorization & Expense Allowance Policies and Procedures, is hereby

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.

  
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RUSSELL McCLOUD, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
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ROBERT L. PICKELS, JR.  
County Administrator/Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND DETERMINED TO BE WITHIN THE SCOPE OF  
PERFORMANCE OF DUTY OF THE YUMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JON R. SMITH, County Attorney